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THE

TAKING OF HUMAN LIFE

INCOMPATIBLE WITH

CHRISTIANITY:

WITH

REMARKS ON "THE PRESENT CRISIS."

BY T. F. TUKESBURY.

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THE TAKING OF HUMAN LIFE INCOMPATIBLE WITH CHRISTIANITY.

Is it not true that the Ten Commandments were given to man that he should obey them without exception? Is not every one of them obligatory in every case? Are we to worship the Lord only, without exception? Are we never to bear false witness? Are we never to steal? Are we never to commit adultery? Are we never to kill? But many are bidding me to stop, saying, "You are carrying things too far;" urging, that "in some extreme cases we may kill, or take the lives of our fellow-men." But this wicked and fallacious idea is not authorized by God; he has never supplied man with exceptions to this command, any more than in committing adultery, or stealing, bearing false witness, or worshiping idols. We think it very far from truth and the spirit of the Bible, to suppose any such exceptions ever allowable. Whether on a large or a small scale, the principle is the same in quality if not in quantity. It matters not whether it be called war, or the deliberate taking of human life. Even in its defensive form it is unauthorized by the Supreme Being. The person who voluntarily or deliberately takes the life of another, has violated a command of Heaven as truly as he who worships an idol, commits adultery, bears false witness, or steals. They are all without exceptions, because God has given none. If, as the objector thinks, there are exceptions to God's commands, who has produced them? Where are they found? Are they not among the unfruitful works of darkness? — among the ruins of the fall, the carnal inventions of the transgressor? In the beginning, when the first murder was committed, God laid down a law or rule of action, applicable to all future generations; but was it to hang the murderer Cain, or to have him shot? We think not. Our opponents say they take a different view of the subject from what we do; but what does this prove? Ought we not to take a scriptural view, — one in harmony with the express declarations of Christ to the law and testimony? This is so plain that "the wayfaring men, though fools," as it is said, "shall not err therein." How,

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then, is it that men have become more degraded and ignorant than fools? Why, indeed; if they were willing to be accounted fools for Christ's sake and the gospel's, they would be willing to be taught by the gospel, and listen to its declarations; they would not attempt to evade the command and precepts of Christ, and fetch up worldly policies and suppositions of extreme cases to sustain their position or theory of justifying human slaughter. No, no: they would flee to the compass, the chart, the command, the word. Let them, then, throw off the veil of prepossessed opinion, and the customs of the world on this point, and look at the Word with candor and honesty, and to its Author for his illuminations. What did God mean when he said, "Whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold, and set a mark upon him, lest any finding him should kill him," if the murderer was to be hung, or killed in any other way? Is it not a link in the same chain with the sixth command and the injunctions of Christ? We apprehend a person must have a very thick veil over his eyes in looking at this declaration, taking a different view of the subject sure enough, if he understands it to mean that Cain was to be butchered. But our opponent is wishing us to let this alone. He wishes to ask what is meant by "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed"? We answer, that there should be a distinguishing between the civil and the moral law. The moral law was binding on all, down to the end of time, but civil and ceremonial laws were not, because Christ was to do them away in introducing the new dispensation. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." And it says, "He hath made the first old," meaning covenant, or law. "Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away." And this civil law of Moses should have vanished away, and would have vanished forever at the dawn of the new dispensation, if all had followed Christ. This was a part of his mission, to do away the former things, as the civil and ceremonial law. As Paul says, "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross; and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." Col. 2: 14, 15. But his enemies spurned his authority, and attempted to overthrow him and his followers, acknowledging themselves to be "*Moses'*

disciples." But the objector may ask, "Was not the moral law also given by Moses?" It was; but it was "written on tables of stone, with the finger of God" (Ex. 31: 18), emphatically, because it was more important; reaching down to the end of time. But all other laws were not, we suppose, because there was less importance attached to them, as they were to be done away. It is a very important idea that our opponent should consider that, while he contends for this law of Moses for shedding the blood of the murderer, he has equal authority for parents to have a disobedient son stoned to death. "And they shall say unto the elders of the city, This our son is stubborn and rebellious: he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton, and a drunkard. And all the men of his city shall stone him with stones that he die." Is our advocate of taking life willing to follow Moses in this? We think he had rather be excused. He is not willing to carry out the Mosaic law in all points. If his son eats too much, and gets drunk on cider, or any other liquor, he does not think it right to have his darling killed simply for this. The duty to kill in one case is as clear as in the other, for both are alike enjoined by the Mosaic law. Therefore our opponent has the argument for all it is worth. And again, if a son or daughter, wife or friend, simply invited their relative or friend to worship idols, they were to be put to death: "Thou shalt surely kill him." Deut. 13: 9. Also, for gathering sticks on the Sabbath, they were to be put to death: "The man shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall stone him with stones." Num. 15: 35. Does our opponent wish to hold on to the Mosaic law, and have his friends and neighbors or himself killed for picking up a few sticks? But what gives a distinguishing feature to the Ten Commandments, or moral law, is, that Christ has never nullified it, but sanctioned it, by teaching that neither jot nor tittle should "pass from the law till all be fulfilled." In the introduction and ushering in of the new dispensation, there was quite a change, so much so, that the enemies of Christ deemed Paul "a setter forth of strange gods, because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection." The ceremonial and the civil law that existed in the days of Moses, under the old dispensation, is entirely done away; we have to do with the moral law only. If men make laws and frame governments in harmony with this law of God and Christ, united with his precepts in the new dispensation, then they ought to be obeyed. But

the objector will say, "This does not answer all emergencies. We do not pretend to say that Christ teaches *war*; but where should we have been if we had not fought on this or that occasion?" In the hands of God, if we had been where we ought to have been; and this would have been a safe place, would it not? Which is safest, to be under God and obey him, or trust in man and his inventions? "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." Jer. 17: 5. Does not a military government make flesh their arm? If not, why do they require so much flesh to constitute what they call power, or the "civil arm"? But it is said, "Were not some of the wars in Old Testament times justifiable?" If God directed them they were. If he gave a special command which could not be mistaken, on any particular occasion, it was right to obey it; but this would never allow of a deviation from his established law at any other time. If God saw fit, in the old dispensation, to lay aside any one of his laws for a time being, and direct his people to pursue a different course, he had a right to do so; but the people had no right to select a time themselves. Nor have they at the present day. God has never appeared and spoken to man under the new dispensation in visible form, except in the person of his Son; and when he was on earth, and spoke to man, no direction to smite or kill one another dropped from his lips. When he left, he promised the Comforter, the Spirit which was to lead into *all* truth; but this Spirit has never taught us to kill even our enemies, but to love and do them good. The fruits of the Spirit are all productive of peace; not one teaches us defensive physical force or resistance: therefore, what the Spirit does not teach we have no moral right to practise. This divine tree, the Spirit, emanating direct from the eternal God, produces fruit amply sufficient to meet all the needs of fallen man. Has a child a right to violate the law of his parent, because another child, on a former occasion, had been directed to do a certain act which was altogether different? People do not question the rectitude of the principle when applied to parents, and why should they not consider it as reasonable when applied to God? If, in the execution of the judgments which he saw fit to inflict upon the people anciently, he employed agents in war as instruments, we have nothing to do with that; our business is to obey in what he has commanded us. Every individual of the fallen race of Adam, every child having

arrived to the understanding of right and wrong, and of the existence of a Supreme Being, and of his revealed will to man, is under the highest obligations to regard that will with filial obedience. And what is the will of our Creator, but his Word, Testimony, Law, or Command, the revelation of his Spirit? And why should we not receive him as our Guide, our Lawgiver, and his Word as our rule of faith and practice? Is it not sufficient in all the various moral concerns of life; in all the multiplied events and changes both in public and private life, a complete rule of action? If not, why did he not make it complete? Did he not know all the emergencies and extremities to which his creatures would be subject? But the objector may ask, "Why propose these questions? We believe the Word of God a complete rule of action, as well as you; *but we must obey our laws.*" This is equal to saying, We believe it, and we disbelieve at the same time. How is it otherwise? *God's Word a complete rule!* yet at the same time assume precisely what amounts to a negative, and say, "We *must* obey our laws: if they say kill, we must kill." Is not such a theory a contradiction, an absurdity, when God says, "Thou shalt not kill"? What consistency is there in obeying a human law when directly opposed to it. It is acknowledging in theory and violating in practice. Men have reversed God's commands in practice, and said, "Thou shalt kill, thou shalt worship idols, thou shalt steal, thou shalt commit adultery;" and almost all the commands of God human laws have allowed men to break. Slavery and adultery were as truly sanctioned or tolerated by "them of old time" as the taking of human life. "And his master shall bore his ear through with an awl, and he shall serve him forever. They shall be your bondmen forever. Thou shalt take an awl, and thrust it through his ear unto the door, and he shall be thy servant forever. And also unto thy maid-servant thou shalt do likewise." Here we see slavery sanctioned by the same code of laws as the taking of life for various alleged crimes. These were some of the laws of the land, termed civil laws; but they were not in harmony with the moral law of God, the command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." There are evil principles and actions recorded in history, not to be imitated, but to be shunned. To say we *must* obey our laws, when they are known and acknowledged to be opposed to the law of Christ, is dishonoring God; it is idolatry; it is honor-

ing man, by making his laws our god, because we make them our supreme rule in practice. It is yielding obedience to man, in opposition to God's law. "To whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey." How is it otherwise? If we are willing to lay aside God's law and obey man's, do we not make this supreme? Some will acknowledge there is no place for the precepts of Christ now, in time of war; they will, however, do to be believed as a dead letter, or an old story, when there is no particular occasion to apply them to practice. Is such treatment of the precepts of Christ holding them supreme, or their Author to be the true God? Our opponents will acknowledge that Christ does not teach war or fightings. Then, who does? we ask. "Why, our laws; and we always thought we had a right to defend ourselves; and where should we have been if our forefathers had not fought?" This, then, is your rule of practice, not Christ's *Word*, — discarding the idea that the Lord should be our defence and refuge in every time of need, or holding it in stupid theory, without carrying it out into active life. That Christ teaches an opposite course from what men pursue cannot be denied; and that he has never approved of such a compound or mixture of the doctrines of men with his own. It is said in 1 Cor., "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." And in the Sermon on the Mount, "No man can serve two masters." Many professing Christianity, both in public and private life, will seem to carry the Bible in one hand and a deadly weapon in the other; but it is awfully inconsistent, and quite opposed to the spirit of the gospel. If human laws were framed in harmony with the gospel of Christ, it would be consistent to obey them; but they are not; they allow fighting, starving, stealing in war, or taking, as they may call it, what is not their own, what they have no moral right to, and killing for various pretenses, according to their maxims of expediency. The Saviour, in whom Christians profess to believe, has never taught that there was any extreme case when such awful practices were justifiable. The question was once asked, "From whence come wars and fightings among you?" The next question answered it. "Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" Is this from a good or an evil source? If from an evil quarter, from whence is the argument for their support derived but from the author and fountain of evil? To sup-

pose there is a situation in which man can be placed that involves the necessity of applying to the devil for assistance, is incompatible with the idea of a Supreme Being. But if God is believed and trusted in, and his commands conscientiously obeyed, he will take care of his creatures in the best manner. If it is best that they should continue on the earth, he will keep them; if not, they should submit to his wisdom in sufferings or death, as did righteous Daniel, Stephen, and others. But it will be asked, as it has often been, "What would you do in this or that extremity?" We answer, that if the evil spirit predominated in our minds, we should be very likely to do evil; but if, on the other hand, the spirit of Christ prevailed in us, we should have a regard for his precepts and commands, which would be likely to induce us to act in accordance with them, or at least, like Paul, try to approximate towards the mark, "not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect, but I follow after." But it is said, "We live under a government, and it is right to obey it." At all hazards? — let the Bible say what it may? Did Daniel think so when he was thrown into the den of lions for disobeying the government under which he lived? He was willing rather to suffer death than violate the law of his God, which said, "Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them." And if *he* could be justified in violating the decree of his rulers, in order to obey this command of God, why should not *we* be as consistent to obey another command with equal precision, given by the same Almighty Being? Was not Daniel here subjected to an extremity quite as extreme as man ever could be? But our opponent is anxiously waiting to present what he considers a very important word. He says, "Government was instituted by God, therefore we should obey it." Indeed we should, when it was instituted by him; but are the professed governments of nations always instituted by God? Is he the author of a government which is in direct opposition to his own law? We ought to have more reasonable, just, and exalted views of the Supreme Being, than to imagine such an absurdity possible. But still the objector cites us to the Word: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers." Let it, indeed, mean rulers or magistrates; but in what sense are we to be subject to them? Are we to violate God's law if they tell us to do so? Let the line be drawn in strict harmony with the other precepts. Is there no

way to be subject to them without obeying their *wicked* decrees? Most certainly there is: we can be subject to all the penalties of disobedience; and this is our duty, whenever God's truth demands it in requiring obedience to the divine law. Thus Daniel was subject to his wicked rulers, by being cast into the den; and many others also have suffered penalties by their rulers, as the martyrs to truth, in various ages. And we ought to be subject to magistrates, in obeying them whenever their decrees do not conflict with the divine law. This should be regarded, in the first place, as supreme, and all other laws bend in harmony to it. "For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God." What is meant, we think, is substantial power, righteous power; power in perfect harmony with its author, God; something worthy of the name; what is good, genuine, holy. Such power is ordained of God. It is not all power that professes to be such. Will our opponent pretend that all the professed powers in the world are good, or what ought to be obeyed? Were those professed powers good which enjoined slavery or idolatry, and was it right to obey them? If not, what can ever make it right to obey those that teach us to butcher our fellow-men? "Whosoever, therefore, resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." Certainly, we ought not to resist the power, whether it be good or bad; we ought not to resist good, or fight against it, by any means; and Christ teaches that we ought not to resist what is bad. "*But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil.*" Therefore, if the government or rulers were bad, Christ does not teach us to resist by carnal weapons; neither does Paul, for he says, "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal." The object of Paul, in recommending a subjection to rulers was, no doubt, to avoid offences as much as possible; not that he sympathized, or had fellowship with the wicked actions of the government. Were those professed powers good, or genuine, or worthy of the name, which those rulers possessed in Paul's day, when they tried to kill him, and put Christ to death, and said, "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die"? Rulers might, indeed, be "ordained," or chosen by God, and yet not fulfill his will. Men are sometimes appointed to fill offices, but they do not always fill them with honor, or in harmony with the wishes of their constituents. When Judas was chosen to fill the apostleship, did he continue to carry it out with honor? "And

they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." It was known that this had been, and would continue to be, their penalty. It was foreseen that rulers would be so far below those merciful principles enjoined in the gospel of Christ that they would be inclined to inflict this penally on their subjects who should attempt resistance, notwithstanding Christ had previously taught them not to resist evil. For what would apply to a subject in relation to God's law would also apply to a ruler, unless the moral law be not obligatory on rulers. If it can be shown that the moral law of God is not binding upon rulers as well as subjects, then the next conclusion is, that they have become holy beings like to God himself; but this can never be proved. "For there is no man that sinneth not." God has reserved to himself the business of inflicting penalties or punishments, and when it is declared so plainly that vengeance belongs to him, how is it consistent to attempt to take it out of his hands? Again, "For rulers are not a terror to good works." Then it must be admitted that all professed rulers are not the rulers intended in the text; for some have been terrors to liberty and the service of God, as Nebuchadnezzar, in setting up an image of gold and requiring the people to fall down and worship when they heard the instruments of music. But what more immediately attracts the attention of our opponent is this: "For he beareth not the sword in vain; for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." First, we would say that he has no right to have a sword, or take it in his hand, because God has given him no right, — has not commanded man to use such a weapon. Christ says, "For all they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword." It was declaring what the ruler *did*, not what he *ought* to do, in obedience to God's Word. Men and rulers in this wicked world do many things; but the great question should be, What *ought* they to do? What conduct is in harmony with the precepts and example of Christ? This is the point which every follower of Christ should be willing to meet. If the ruler did things that were not in accordance with the words of Christ or the commands of Jehovah, we may rest assured that such works were not ordained of God. For, would he ordain what was opposed to his own holy law? And, indeed, the apostle himself ought not to be understood as teaching contradictions. If he meant to convey the idea that it was right for rulers to

have swords and use them, what did he mean by saying, "Bless and curse not"? Was it any thing short of a curse to "to execute wrath" and damnation "upon him that doeth evil"? Let the candid reader consider. What greater curse could it be to the individual than to be the subject of wrath and damnation? And more: "Recompense to no man evil for evil." No, "*to no man*," neither subjects nor rulers. What was the intention of the sword but to recompense evil for evil, life for life? "Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." How is it consistent for man to set himself up, or be set up by his fellow-man, to be "a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil," when God has reserved it to himself? And Paul, in the same chapter, rehearses the commands, "Thou shalt not kill," and "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." What was the sword for but to kill; to do precisely what the command forbids? And is it loving our neighbor *as* ourselves to take away his life? And further: if it was right for private persons to obey God's commands, why not for rulers also? Were not the commands intended for *all*? Because the ruler was the minister of God, it does not prove that all he did was in accordance with the will of God, any more than that the conduct of Peter and Judas was right, because they were chosen apostles. Rulers are to be obeyed just so far as their requirements do not conflict with the divine law of God; this is to take the lead, and all other rules and regulations to bend to it; but the general practice of the world is to attempt to bend God to man's terms, — which will finally prove an awful failure. Government has no more right to violate the law of God in killing its subjects, than parents have in killing their children. Does the Christian parent, who holds that "there is no government without penalties," think himself justified in shooting his child because he cannot keep him in, as he thinks, in any other way? There are cases where children cannot be kept under parental authority any more than subjects to government; but no worthy parent thinks it right to kill his children because they are "rebellious." If it be *wicked* for parents to kill their children for disobedience, what can ever make it *right* for governments to kill their subjects for disobedience? Is not life as precious in the eyes of the Lord in one case as in the other? Parents have educated their children to disobedience by their own foolish indulgence

and negligence, and they must content themselves with the consequences, and not violate a command of *their* heavenly *Parent*, because their child has violated *theirs;* but rather charge the blame to themselves, and acquiesce in their just desert of the consequences. So ought government to do the same; but it has kept its standing army in readiness to violate the laws of heaven, in the butchery of its own subjects or those of their neighbors: and what is the wonder if their subjects should learn to do wickedly from the corrupt example of their leaders; and we deeply regret that professed Christians and teachers of religion have merited so large a share of the guilt, by overlooking or misapplying the plain precepts of the gospel. If a child, or a subject, cannot be led into a place of safety without bidding defiance to the God of heaven, in the violation of his command, then let them go: God will stop them in his own time; our business should be to trust in him, *and do as he has commanded*, and we shall be safe. What can be a more permanent and a safer retreat than the promised protection of the Almighty? Past history has proved that a peaceable course has been the best and safest. This was proved to be true in the history of the Friends, in the time of the rebellion of 1798, in Ireland; and also in the government of Pennsylvania, "for more than seventy years," until men of war came into its legislature, and voted down those happy, peaceful laws, and introduced a system subject to war, as other States. If professed Christianity had cherished and sustained the principles of the gospel, and had acted upon them in public life, so far even as William Penn acted, war would have been a moral impossibility, we think, long ere this. If robbery or death comes upon us in consequence of following the precepts of Christ the Lord, we may rest in the contemplation of the promise of "blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." But it is said, "We are taught to use some resistance, for it says, 'Resist the devil.'" Very true; and what are the weapons to use but those of a moral nature, such as Paul used, which he said were not carnal? The disciples were allowed to pay tribute or taxes, notwithstanding it might be applied to wicked purposes; and, indeed, it will be readily admitted that a portion went to support idolatry; but "lest we should offend them," says Christ, "go thou to the sea," &c., "that take, and give unto them for me and thee." This example of

Christ has been taken as an argument to support war, but a moment's observation will prove it unfounded. Did it not as truly support idolatry as it did war, when both were alike sanctioned by government? No one believes he had the least respect for idolatry; such an idea would be fallacious in the extreme; it would be dethroning himself. The paying of tribute was approved of, no doubt, for the purpose of exercising a peaceable deportment. If it was Cæsar's, they were to let him have it. "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's."

Again, it is said, "They were 'to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work.'" It was not an unlimited or an unconditional obedience that was enjoined here; the very expression, "every good work," forbids this; but it was in things which did not conflict with the law of God which was "holy, just, and good." They were to be "gentle, showing all meekness unto *all* men." Is this the province of soldiers or self-defenders with deadly weapons, to show gentleness and meekness to *every* man? If not, how then is their conduct compatible with the expression "all men"? But again, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme, or unto governers, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers." Now our opponent thinks he has a text that will comprehend the whole, and put almost every other in the Bible to silence, we suppose; but as we have said before, every thing should be understood in a manner to harmonize with the law of God, the general tone of Scripture. But if so, what disposition can be made of the text? We say the word *submission* does not always imply unlimited obedience; we may submit to the penalty of the law, as Christ did in being put to death by the civil authorities in his day, who said, "*We have a law*, and by our law he ought to die." He submitted to the ordinance of man in this. We may sometimes submit in obeying the law, and at other times in suffering its penalties. The martyrs have submitted in suffering its penalties. Therefore we may submit, in *obeying* or *suffering*, "to *every* ordinance of man;" this is what is meant, we think, and this we ought to do. This view of the subject will harmonize with the divine law, and no other will, we believe. This submission is to be made "for the Lord's sake;" not for wicked, worldly policies, but with an eye single to God's glory: a regard for his truth, his command, his honor.

These governors were sent by the king for the punishment, as he thinks, of "evil doers." Christ and all the martyrs to truth were considered "evil doers" by wicked governors, and suffered the punishment assigned them. But which are entitled to the greatest respect and honor, Christ and his followers, or those rulers who said, "Away with this man"? Many who now say, by their practice, Away with his precepts, have sometimes acknowledged that "we ought to keep the *commands of God*," when they have spoken in a religious attitude, yet on other occasions attempt to maintain argument against it indirectly. The truth is, their senses are stupified by custom or a corrupt education, or they do not really believe it safe to keep the commands of God in every extremity, but take liberty to form up exceptions, or take those of their ancestors to suit their convenience. They have always been accustomed to think it right to defend and resist with physical force, and to kill an enemy to save life or property. They have not been ready, like the Christian martyrs, to adhere to the divine law, and give up their lives rather than violate it, and show to the world that they have a higher regard for God and his Word than for any other object whatever. Christ teaches that a man is to hate "his own life, also," among other endearments, or "he cannot be my disciple." What does this mean, but that he is to love God and regard his Word *above life itself*? And, if this be his faith, is he not to prove it by his works? If we are to love God with all the heart, mind, and strength, and our neighbor as ourself, how is it consistent to employ these faculties in seeking the destruction of our fellow-men under any pretence whatever? If we are not allowed to butcher ourselves, and are to love our neighbor *as* ourselves, what can ever make it right to take his life? We are taught, also, to love our enemies. If we are to love friends, neighbors, and enemies too, there is none remaining for us to hate, to kill, unless loving them means to kill them. Therefore, the command is positive; no room is found for exceptions if we want them; if we add them, we are adding to the Word. Is it an exhibition of love to an individual to raise a weapon of defence either to fight or to take his life? It seems that reason would answer *no*. But it will be said, "Must we submit to every insult, to robbery, and death, also?" If in obeying God it should be required. Have we not the example of the good, the just, for it; and above all, the precepts and example

of Christ himself? The submission of subjects to government will as truly apply to servants in relation to their masters, for, in the same chapter, servants are taught to be subject to their masters, "not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward." But we are not now treating upon slavery, although we abhor it in every form. Another argument has been brought against peace, that, "because we have the instincts of nature, and God has implanted them in us, and that self-preservation is one of those instincts, therefore, we ought to obey this, and kill our enemy to save our life or property." How is this? May we seek to preserve life by *every* means, at the expense of God's commands? Are we to do what he has forbidden, to secure life, or for any other consideration? "He that loveth his life shall lose it." If he loves his temporal life, or a future life of happiness, so much as to take an unrighteous course to secure it, or better than he does God and obedience to his Word, he must expect to lose it unless he reverses his love, as sure as God is true; for Christ says, "No man can serve two masters." If he is willing to violate a command of Heaven to save his idol, life, it will prove that he has no celestial, enduring treasure beyond the present life. We are not to save our lives by unrighteous means, in taking a course that God has forbidden; it is not allowed. If we do it intentionally, we do it at the peril of God's eternal displeasure; we expose ourselves to the wrathful indignation of the Almighty. "For whosoever *will* save his life"—that is, contrary to God's law—"shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it." This is the way the holy martyrs were willing to lose theirs. Again, if the instincts of nature are to become law, and always to be gratified and obeyed, regardless of moral obligation, it would inevitably lead to vice and ruin. Are we always to obey the instincts of appetite and thirst? If so, we may become gluttons and drunkards with righteous impunity; but it is not so. Although David and Solomon were guilty in violating the commands of God to gratify their own sensual desires and appetites,—the instincts of their natures,—will their conduct ever prove it *right* to do so? All the instincts of man's nature are good, unless acquired by the fall. The great error and crime is, the *perversion* of those instincts. If we have the instinct of preservation, God does not command us to use it to violate his law; he has given it for an honorable and laudable purpose, to be

applied in harmony with his revealed will, in seeking both temporal and spiritual good, and by laboring in the providing of the various conveniences of life, both for ourselves and others; even towards our enemies, has enjoined it upon us to do them good. "Do good unto all men, feed the hungry, clothe the naked." To seek the present and future well-being of *all*, and *not* their misery and destruction. If there were some extreme cases when we were to do evil to some individuals or nations who had injured us, to steal from them, to starve or to kill them, and burn their dwellings or cities, would not the all-wise God have made a law providing for such emergencies? But it is not so; *vile man* has employed *his* ingenuity in framing exceptions to God's divine and perfect law. The instinct of self-preservation is, therefore, joined with benevolence, or love to others, which would induce us to do good to "*all men*," not only to those of our own party or nation, but our enemies. The same instinct that would induce one to save his own life, would induce him to save the lives of others, unless it was perverted; it would be "love thy neighbor *as* thyself." And further, it would be, "love ye your enemies," and "do good to them that hate you." Is not *this* the pattern laid down for imitation? How do these precepts of Christ accord with the war system? Are they to be obeyed, or those of war governments and wicked men, who say, "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth"? It is a perversion of the instinct of nature to destroy the lives of our fellow-men, whether it be to save our own, or for any other pretence, because directly opposed to the divine precepts of Christ; for it is highly inconsistent to suppose that the Author of our being would endow man with any thing for the purpose of violating his own law. Whatever is opposed to the commands of God, or the example and precepts of Christ, may with truth be denominated sinful. If, in gratifying an instinct of nature, we are led to break a command, we may be sure we carry things too far. If a person, for the preservation of his life, friends, property, honor, or for any consideration whatever, is willing to forego the consequences of disobeying the commands of Heaven, he has not the least vestige of assurance left him, or a single promise of life in the whole Bible, either temporal or eternal; for it is in the keeping of the commands that everlasting life is promised. "But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." To abstain from killing was meant

for one, as we understand it. It seems that nothing can be more plain than the words of Christ: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil." Was it not quite an opposite course that Christ recommended or commanded his followers to pursue, from what they had been taught? Can the objector deny this? Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, and life for life, was according to the civil law of Moses, and has been handed down to the present day by wicked men, both in private life and in public administration of law, and Christ's words passed by with a heedless indifference and formal or theoretical belief that "they are all right, or well enough; but we must defend ourselves." They are not deemed a complete and safe rule of action. Is such a course compatible with Christianity? Let the candid inquirer after truth ponder and answer, fearlessly, before a corrupt and degenerated church. Christ did not allow his disciples to do as others had done or were doing,—to hate their enemies, to render evil for evil; but if they would *overcome evil*, they were to do it with *good*. This was *their* province: to follow their Master; to labor in the way that *he* taught, whether they always realized success or not; they were to leave the *consequences* of obedience to God, and trust in him, whatever might be their lot, whether life or death, and exercise those dispositions which Stephen possessed, that induced him to pray as he did, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." It was in unison with those of Christ, "Father, forgive them." We do not apprehend that Stephen, possessing this god-like spirit, would have caused his enemies to have been butchered, had he possessed all the means of physical force or military power at his command, for it would have been acting in quite an opposite direction from his prayer. Paul said, "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty." And of what was such mighty armory composed? "Of truth, righteousness, the preparation of the gospel of peace, faith, salvation, the Word of God, all prayer, supplication in the Spirit, watching, with all perseverance." The Lord only was to be their defence, while they were to exercise "the fruit of the Spirit," which is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Is war, or the destruction of human life, included in any of these, or can it exist with them? Is war a fruit of the Spirit? No sane person can believe it. From whence, then, does it come? On

what tree does it grow? On lust, we answer: "Even of your lusts." Lust, then, helps to form a part of the rule of faith and practice of professed Christianity; for, indeed, war is incorporated into their practice. This cannot be evaded, for they lend their approbation, their fellowship, and their encouragement to their brethren to go out and array themselves in mortal combat with their fellows, — those whom Christ commands them to love. The fruits of the Spirit are, perhaps, deemed well enough, but not considered safe to rely on in extreme cases; therefore, God's rule is to be laid aside in certain emergencies, and our laws or man's rule adopted. Is such conduct reflecting honor upon the Supreme Being? He says, "them that honor me I will honor." Is it honoring God to disregard his Word? Can the sincere inquirer after truth say, without blasphemy, that any of this "fruit of the Spirit" teaches war, or fighting with physical force, or deliberately taking the lives of our fellow-men in any case? And if the fruits of the Spirit do not lead to it in any case, what can ever make it right? Is it justifiable to resort to an evil quarter to sustain our position? Are not those forbidden fruits which are opposed to the fruits of the Spirit? And are such to be sought and cultivated? If so, then sin becomes a justifiable rule of conduct, and infidelity the next step. But we would fain persuade our opponent to consider, before he ventures farther in such a direction, if there is not a more excellent way, a safer retreat: to the Law and to the Testimony. To what higher source can we resort than to this? Is it not, indeed, a sufficient rule of faith and practice? If so, how does it require the carnal wisdom of man to complete it? Is man above God, or become his equal? or is God joined with Baal? Is it right to serve both, or even attempt to do it? When government teaches us to kill, to steal from and starve our enemy, we say this is a plain violation of God's holy commands; it is the works of darkness; it is the maxim and custom of ungodly men, which Christians ought not to follow, to be consistent. "If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." It is a mongrel, heathenish, stupid, corrupt, and infidel idea, to suppose for a moment that Christianity allows such a violation of its own laws; such a complete jargon of attempting to blend Christ with Baal. "For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?"

Again, the objector tells us, that "Christ 'came not to send peace, but a sword.'" We reply, also, that "the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." Christ did not come to send such a peace as the prophet and priest cried, "Saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace:" but he would send "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." The word *sword* was figurative, signifying the moral effect of his truth, his Spirit, a profession of faith in him coming in contact with surrounding influences that were opposed to it; this would constitute the spiritual warfare which Paul meant, when he said, "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal." No honest student of the Bible, we believe, can doubt such a construction; therefore, the argument amounts to only words of idle pretence. But our opponent has another objection, that Christ said, "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." This was not a command; it was simply a permission to let him make such a bargain, seeing he was so intent upon it, in the same sense that God now lets the wicked pursue their evil courses. "And he gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul." Some of the disciples at this time had become impatient and weary of following their Master's precepts or of receiving his words, we find, from the previous context; by the question that he asked them: "When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing?" But now, seeing they were so intent on leaving him, and disregarding his words, as at one time "all the disciples forsook him, and fled;" and now so anxious to resort to worldly sources for help, he, therefore, gave them up, to a certain degree, to have their own way, and reap the sad consequences. This was the case with Peter, more especially than the rest, excepting Judas; and when Peter, that religious coward, acting the part of a satanic hero, began to make the first use of the sword, did Christ commend him for it? By no means; but, "Put up again thy sword into his place; for all they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword." If it had been his will, or if he had commanded them to buy swords, would he have forbidden or reproved the using of the first one? Christ says, "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." If we are to fear God only, we need no deadly weapons for this purpose; those fruits of the Spirit are all we need, and all that

God enjoins upon us. And they are called "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." If God sees fit to remove any stronghold of evil, he will do so; and if he directs us, as instruments in the accomplishment of it, are not those weapons which he recommends, and those only, fit or proper to be used? We are to do it in the way that he teaches, not as man teaches, and use those materials which God has taught us in his Word, leaving the consequences with him, with filial trust and confidence, believing him to be a supreme Guide in every extremity. And for their encouragement, has not God supplied his followers with ample promises in the Bible? Wherefore, then, should they fear? It is said that "fear hath torment;" but it is not that "fear of the Lord" which "tendeth to life." We are to fear to violate his commands. If he has taught us not to kill, but to love our enemy, and seek to "overcome evil with good," if we overcome it at all, we are to *regard* what he has said, not what was "said by them of old time." To have a regard for the precepts of Christ, would imply that we have active endeavors to carry them into practice, at least to believe the thing practicable, and strive to seek that faith which will propel us to obedience. It is then only that we can have a gospel claim to be Christ's disciples, or have any reason to expect the final reward of the righteous. But the advocate of war practically cries out, "All your Bible pleading is vain; it is of no use; we must sustain our rights." If the presenting of Bible truth be in vain and ineffectual to convince individuals, how can such persons be Bible Christians, or followers of Christ? If our rights cannot be sustained by adhering to the principles of Christianity, we are not bound to sustain them. This is proved by the conduct of the righteous martyrs. God's rights or claims are to be sustained in the first place; and obedience to his commands and precepts are those rights. If we assume a position beyond this, that "our rights must be sustained at the expense of God's," we become idolaters at once. Our Creator has a right to obedience from all his intelligences. If, in obedience to the laws of the Supreme Being, we meet with temporal losses, or calamities of whatever nature, it becomes us, as his rational subjects, to receive them with meekness and submission, taking God at his word, believing him to be possessed of supreme power to deliver whenever his wisdom dictates. The Word says, "Ye have condemned and killed the just;

and he doth not resist you." History and observation has proved, in all ages of the world, that wicked and unjust men have delighted in resistance; but here we are taught that the just do not resist. This is in harmony with what Christ says in Matt. 5: 39. Now, which is best to follow, the example of wicked and unjust men, or that of the just, when in harmony with the command of Christ? Here are two courses or channels for the world to run in, — a narrow, and a broad way. It is awful to witness the great mass of professors of Christianity following in this broad way, in opposition to the plain precepts of their professed Saviour. The way of resistance is broad, for the many are in it, and because it leads to destruction. It is quite congenial to the natural inclinations of every fallen being since the days of Adam. Almost every child is born into the world ready for fight as soon as its powers are developed. But it is quite becoming for Christians to turn their attention to God, and adhere to the commands, and pursue the narrow way, as he instructs them to do, trusting in him. But "blindness in part is happened to Israel." It is hardness through unbelief of the truth of God. They have not fully learned of him who was "meek and lowly in heart." It is the wisdom of this world that predominates and chokes the Word, that it becomes unfruitful in the wisdom of God. They are not willing to be esteemed "fools for Christ's sake," and pattern after him who left them the example. "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." The blindness most common with professors of Christianity bears a similarity to that of Paul before his conversion. They seem to think they are doing God's service, when in fact they are serving "the god of this world." Paul says, "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." So would many professed Christians now say, were they honest enough to acknowledge it, that "it will not do; it is not safe to obey all the precepts of Christ." They are not willing to look at the subject in the light of revelation, and abide the consequences. Things look quite different with the light of a bright noonday sun, to what they do with a poor, crazy, dim lantern, of man's invention; so do things look different by the light of

the Sun of Righteousness, to what they do by the light of political government policies. It is not true gospel patriotism to encourage or sustain war. Jesus Christ loved the whole human family, and taught his followers the same: to "do good unto all men." A principle quite at variance with the idea of murdering a part, and hastening their souls to the world of spirits unprepared. The Word is full of proofs that the doctrine of physical defence or resistance is wrong, and that peace is right, and always right; and that it is the duty of an individual to act upon this principle, whether others do or not; for "every one of us shall give account of himself to God." There are many other Scripture texts to this point, among which are the following: "If any man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." Is it not evident that Christ meant to establish the point beyond a doubt, that we should abstain entirely from fighting, and seek to be at peace with all men, even if it cost us sacrifices or temporal losses? "Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded?"

But again it is objected, that "these words were spoken to the disciples, the church, not to the world and governments." Then the disciples and church should adopt these peace principles, should they not? Why don't they do it? Why all this opposition to peace, and all this voluntary shedding of their brother's blood? If *they* are for peace, why do they fight, or encourage others in human slaughter? The truth is, all such pretension is vain; the dove of peace has scarcely a resting-place for the sole of her foot. If it was right for the church to practice the principles of the gospel, it was right for all others. Is it not agreeable to the divine will that all persons and governments should come up to the divine standard of righteousness and truth? And because one *will* not do it, does it argue that another *should* not? If one will not apply to the Almighty for wisdom, with trustful obedience to his Word, is it a good reason why another should not? And, if individuals and nations will not apply to the right source for a remedy, they must content themselves with the woful consequences which attend the enemies of Christ. Another objection is brought forward in opposing peace: that "Christ 'made a scourge of small cords,' and 'drove them all out of the temple.'" We say, as God, he had a right to do it, and *that* right he never conceded to man. And, besides, there is no

account that he struck the first blow upon a single individual. It was the influence of his moral power that produced a willingness to give place. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." He no sooner entered the temple, than they were willing to yield to his wishes. But we have "precept upon precept." "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." "Recompense to no man evil for evil." "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore, if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." "See that none render evil for evil unto any man." "Let us do good unto all men." "Follow peace with all men." Does this mean following war with a *part* of our fellow-men? Have all the words of Christ no meaning? Are they idle tales? Can one disposed to honesty so construe them as to make them mean that we are to defend our rights with weapons of death and kill our fellow-men? The gospel requires too much faith for most men; but the Bible says, "The just shall live by faith." "Trust in the Lord and do good." Is it doing good to men to wound and butcher them, and send their souls to perdition? Would such treatment to us be doing us good? It is a plain violation of God's truth, an inconsistency, a blind infatuation, to sustain or encourage such a system; the greatest curse, by far, that ever infested the world. O, when will Christians learn of the Prince of Peace, and regard his Word as a standard of principle and action; and proclaim against this inhuman butchery, this maddening principle of defending their rights by physical force? It opens the way to every vice. The immense suffering and loss of life and consequent ruin of souls, make it the greatest calamity ever known to man: yet professors of Christianity think it justifiable, and give it their support; this, one of the foulest and blackest of crimes that ever stained the character of mortals. The Lord says in Isaiah, to his professed people, "When ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood." And to David, in 1 Chronicles, "Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou hast been a man of war,

and hast shed blood." Although Christians, through blindness, have set at naught God's counsel, and thick darkness pervades the land, a light is yet to burst forth; for it is promised when sword and spear are to be converted into implements of tillage. "And they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig-tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken it." It is the duty of every lover of human improvement, and especially of every Christian, to apply his influence to the promotion of such a glorious era; but it will be delayed until the principles of Christ are received and applied to *active life*. So long as professed Christians *believe*, and *teach*, and *act* upon the principle of compulsion by physical force, or of resisting evil, when Christ says "resist not evil," no extensive reform will be effected. There must be self-denying concessions in adhering to the precepts of Christ, and a willingness to suffer for his sake and the gospel's, or we never can claim the honor of contributing to this great humane or civil improvement of UNIVERSAL PEACE ON EARTH.

THE many plead their rights to gain
By fighting with their carnal will,
But rights of God we should maintain;
This is the stream, or gospel rill.

Did not the law of God forbid
The killing of that murderer, Cain?
'Twas no unmeaning truth, nor hid,
But meant for man to e'er sustain.

Did God the Lord a rule prescribe
With Cain, the rebel, there to end,
And future men nor future tribe
Their future action ne'er to blend?

No, no; the thought is quite absurd:
His Word forbids the vain belief.
Have we ne'er read, or never heard,
The Sixth Command, how full and brief?

Whatever Jewish laws or rites
Existed in the days of old,
None but God's own eternal rights,
And these have not remained untold.

The moral law, or Ten Commands,
On the tables of stone revealed
By the finger of God, and stands
A faithful copy unconcealed.

A veil has spread o'er fallen mind
In many ages long since past,
Which veil, until this day, we find,
But hope it done away at last.

In Christ 'twill flee before our eyes,
This Mosaic, Jewish legal veil:
And those whom Christ calls truly wise
Will let his light and truth prevail.

In heart and soul and active life,
Those sacred precepts from his lips
Should be adopted, void of strife,
On land or sea, in all our ships.

But still the rebel boldly cries,
"By man shall man's own blood be shed!"
Rebels to God, with rebels' eyes,
By Moses and by Satan led.

With equal force does Moses cry,
In ancient code of civil laws:
"For gathering sticks you, too, must die,
And reckless sons of father's laws."

In many wars did David fight:
Permitted not God's house to build.
"A man of war," not wholly right;
With good alone not fully filled.

But Christ appears, "a great High-Priest;"
"The Prince of Peace" from heaven did come,
Teaching to man, "Do not resist,
But evil with good to overcome."

By precept and example, too,
Amid a wicked, reckless tribe,
The Son of God spread out to view
His will to man to e'er abide.

Can mortal man deny this truth,
What Jesus Christ our Lord hath said
To all the aged and the youth,
"Fear not, nor ever be dismay'd?

"But ever do as he had done,
Who, when reviled, returned it not;
But commit to the Holy One
His present and his future lot."

THE PRESENT CRISIS—1863.

In the first place, it is acknowledged by those who have given the New Testament a careful examination, that it does not teach us to fight or kill in any case. If we had a direct commission from God, it would be right to obey it; but we have no such commission. Christ has never enjoined it upon us to enter upon the business of human butchery. All his precepts and requirements are opposed to it; this cannot be denied. If he is a Supreme Being, his words are supreme, and to be regarded above all others. The Christian has no moral right to use his influence to sustain any government which is not in accordance with the precepts of Christ and the direct command of God. It is especially the duty of believers in the existence of a Supreme Being, if they be in favor of human governments, that they be favorable only to those framed upon the principles of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Such would be peaceable: no fighting would be attached to them, but "the good fight of faith;" no weapons, but the fruits of the Spirit. It is consistent and reasonable, we believe, to take the Word as a rule, or lay it entirely aside and believe in infidelity. Is it not becoming for the Christian to believe, and act from the fruits of the Spirit? or is it right to turn away upon some occasions and act on some other principle? Are "wars and fightings," or resistance by the use of carnal weapons, enumerated among the fruits of the Spirit? If not, then have we no right to resort to them. Is it not declared plainly from whence they come, "even of your lusts?" Not simply from the lusts of some others, but your lusts, you who engage in wars and fightings, and all who lend their influence to favor them. We are confident of one thing, that politicians are not very profoundly versed in an enlightened national philosophy, or they would never have gone to war, or had in possession any of the heathenish warlike preparations: and much more would they not if they had understood the principles of the gospel, and acted in harmony with them. They would take no part in fighting by mortal combat. But it is said, "neutrality is plainly impossible." We say this is a mistake, for we have

remained neutral, and some others, and all might have done so, and no conflict would have been attempted; even if professed Christians alone had acted in harmony with the religion taught by the "Prince of Peace," we believe our country would not have been deluged with human slaughter; if it had, the blood would not have been found in their skirts. It can be proved that we ought not to take sides with either North or South; for the simple reason, that both are wrong. In proof of this, Christ declares that we are not to resist evil, but to overcome it with good; this is the way he teaches us to do it, if we attempt to overcome it at all. But the idea of adhering to Christ's instructions is practically spurned by the great mass of the professed Christian world, to say nothing of others. The common method is to endeavor to overcome evil with evil. This, as well as every other war, is acknowledged to be an evil. All fighting with physical force is evil, and cannot be practised without evil, whether it be between individuals or nations, — at least, the evil of disobeying God's commands; and is not this enough to insure its condemnation? But man takes liberty, by his own wicked inventions, to hatch up exceptions to all God's commands, and kill, steal, or confiscate, bear false witness, commit adultery, worship idols, &c., according to his own inclination or supposed necessity. It is all opposed to the gospel, contrary to all its holy precepts. The Spirit of Christ does not teach it. "The Son of man came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them;" and he taught his followers the same doctrine, not to remain as a dead letter, but to be applied to active life, however difficult; it is to be attempted; and, if with faith in God and perseverance, they have his promised assistance, protection, and deliverance, according as his infinite wisdom shall dictate. If he suffers their temporal life to be taken away, and takes their spirits to himself, they are to acquiesce in such wisdom. The Word declares our duty to "take it patiently." "But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled." "Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator." "Why do ye not rather take wrong" and "suffer yourselves to be defrauded?" Is not this the Word? and others might be quoted to the same point. It is in vain for our opponents to attempt to waive such texts, and resort to military govern-

ment policies for arguments, when God's government is supreme: their province is to prove first that there is no God; when they have done this in truth, then they may look up to man-made governments and obey them; but, until then, no government is worthy of the name unless framed in unison with the gospel of Christ. Such should be obeyed. Other governments are to be submitted to without resistance, but not obeyed. This is the example of Christ and his followers, and of Daniel and others anciently. Daniel submitted to the punishment which the government saw fit to inflict for praying to God; and his three companions did not obey the wicked decree to fall down in idol worship at the sound of the musical instruments. That government was not framed according to God's law, nor are governments at the present day. But the present practice of the professed Christian world, almost universally, is, to tread under foot the holy, peaceable principles of the gospel, and hold up their own inventions as supreme, obeying man rather than God. Almost all governments have been hostile to the doctrines of Christ. There has been one case, however, if no others, where a government was maintained more nearly in accordance with the gospel than is common; we refer to Pennsylvania under the administration of William Penn. Although it might be imperfect, yet, so far as human butchery was concerned, it was nearer perfection, having no military force whatever. This example alone, it would seem, were enough, with a moderate share of common sense, to prove the thing practicable if there were no God or divine revelation. We say, no government is founded on the principles of Christ that requires military force to sustain it; hence, the follower of Christ has no moral right to lend his influence to uphold it; if he does, he takes sides against Christ. We desire slavery done away as much as others, perhaps, but think we have no commission from heaven to attempt it by violence; but again and again would say, we are to do it in God's way if we do it at all, using those weapons alone which he recommends, which are the fruits of the Spirit, "not carnal, but mighty." If slavery or rebellion be an evil, — and we grant they are both evils of no small magnitude, — we are, in the language of Scripture, to "overcome evil with good," and not resist by violence as was done "by them of old time;" eye for eye, tooth for tooth, blow for blow, and life for life. Again,

we are told that "The rebels, like all wrong-doers, ask only to be let alone." We would ask if other nations would not be wrong-doers to attempt war upon us? Therefore, if we have got to resist all wrong-doers, we should go to war with other nations. Does this look like peace men's principles? Yet our opponent's own words and views will inevitably land him on the broadest platform of general warfare; he cannot escape such a dilemma. If the rebels, as he says, "ask only to be let alone," why, in the name of common sense, would it not be better for us to let them alone? Present and future consequences will prove that it would, beyond all doubt; and, more than this, the Word proves that we should let them alone. "Leave off contention." "It is an honor to cease from strife." "Ephraim is joined to his idols; let him alone." If we are to let him alone, certainly we are not to fight with him. But the question is asked, "Would you have us resist or discountenance a due enforcement of the laws?" We answer, that we ought not to resist, whether the government be good or evil, because the gospel forbids it; but to discountenance evil is our duty wherever we find it. If the laws are evil, the enforcement of them must be evil. It is certain that all laws which are contrary to the gospel are evil. A law that requires us to kill our fellow-men is evil because the command of God and precepts of Christ forbid it. What more authority have we to qualify or nullify the command not to kill than we have those which forbid idol worship, theft, adultery, or any of the rest? They are all strictly binding; not admitting of a "jot or tittle" to pass, so long as the heaven and earth endure. And poor finite man is verily guilty, to rob God of his due, which is strict obedience. The government allows and requires that the rebels or our enemies be killed, starved, or robbed. But the gospel requires the opposite. This cannot be honestly denied. Government is more generally obeyed, and Christ set at nought and his precepts spurned, in practice, if not fully in theory, when men enter upon the business of human butchery, whether in private individual combat, or in public warfare. But the position the Word has taught is obedience to God, and suffering, if required, for Christ's sake and the gospel's. This will comprehend every extremity. Before the fulfilment of the prophecy in Micah iv. 3, 4, takes place, all those poor, wicked, war-shattered governments will fall; because they are

upon a sandy foundation, — having Satan at their right hand. But again it is said, "We all regard civil government as a divine appointment for the benefit of society." We believe that a government contrary to the gospel of Christ is neither of divine appointment, nor for the benefit of society. If all governments are of divine appointment, a slave-holding one would be, and all the barbarous governments that ever existed. But is there not a standard by which to try them all, — the command and precepts of Jesus Christ? We know of no higher source or better authority. He is the Rule, Standard, and Lawgiver. If governments are not according to this, we say they are unworthy of support. But our opponent says, "It *must* punish crime, or it ceases in fact to be a government." This makes government a supreme power; but no government of man has any moral right to assume such power, but be in subordination to the law of God. Now, the law of God does not teach man to punish crime. We know the Jewish law taught it; but it was this very law that Christ meant by the expression, "It hath been said an eye for an eye," &c. Did he not teach his followers to pursue a different course? "But I say unto you," What did he say? — that ye resist your enemy or the rebels? *No;* but, "*that ye resist not evil.*" "If thine enemy hunger, feed him," &c. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord." Does not this clearly mean that God himself is to punish crime? If not, what does it mean? And if God has declared it to be his business, man assumes too much in attempting to take it out of God's hands; it is plainly insulting the Almighty to do so. Such conduct would be deemed an insult among men. The duty of man is clearly declared in the precepts of Christ, and it is wholly conciliatory. "He that is without sin" might be allowed to "cast the first stone," or perform the punishment of the criminal. God, who is without sin, is the one to sit in judgment and punish man according to his unerring wisdom. It is the undeniable doctrine that Jesus Christ taught, in plain declaration from his own lips, which strips government, and all other human departments, of their power or moral right to punish crime or sin. But still the question is asked, "What shall we do?" The Word is full of answers; we need only to apply to it to know what to do. "Cease to do evil, learn to do well." Are we commanded to wait until the world be ready before we attempt it ourselves? If you say

war is an evil, then let it alone, and take no part in it: cease from it. "Trust in the Lord and do good," and the glorious promise will follow. But is it doing good to destroy life and hasten souls to perdition? Is *this* what is meant by doing good? Is obedience to the decrees of a wicked government of higher moment than the salvation of body and soul, and the approbation of God? "We should be very glad," says our opponent, "if you can make the path of our duty plain." What is the path of duty but to obey God, to walk in "the way of holiness"? and "the way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein." Those that walk in this way are indeed fools in the eyes of the world. But we do not consider mortal combat or a fighting government to be "the way of holiness;" obedience to God's commands looks more like it. Again he says, "Tell us, if you can, precisely what we shall do in the present crisis of our country." Stop and think, before you go farther. "Repent of this thy wickedness," — the wickedness of giving countenance and support to a government which requires you to violate the commands of Heaven. Such countenance and support you should have ceased giving long ago, to have prevented the difficulty. If all the nominal Christian sects had, from the first, stood on gospel ground, abiding in the Vine, Jesus Christ, exhibiting in all the walks of life his holy precepts, such an influence upon the world, we think, would have prevented the trouble. But now the blood of souls and bodies, too, will be found in their skirts. The Lord said to the people anciently by the prophet Isaiah, "And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: *your hands are full of blood.*" And in Matt. xv. 9; "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." And now, God has not, nor will he ever hear, their wicked petitions to terminate the war as they would have it, without drawing upon themselves as much evil as they inflict upon their enemies. They have no gospel authority to crush their brother or any human intelligence, but to love and "do good unto *all* men." The doctrine from heaven was this: "*On earth Peace, good-will toward men.*" And what remains now in the present crisis, is, to submit to God, bear the punishment, and cease to accumulate more guilt, by breaking off from the sin of giving countenance or encouragement to wickedness, whether it

be under the sanction of government or not. We have no account that either Christ or his true followers took any part in the political government, or that he gave any such instructions; they paid taxes, and simply submitted peaceably to its penalties in sufferings or death. And, besides, it is quite unreasonable to suppose that Christ or his followers recognized the existing civil government as a righteous institution, when its laws required that he and his disciples should be put to death or imprisoned. His enemies — the *rulers* — said, "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die." And Paul had letters from the civil authorities to bind and commit to prison. It was a government employed to root out Christianity from the face of the earth. The elements of governments at the present day, so far as resistance and killing are concerned, are the same, — precisely opposed to all those precepts of Christ relative to peace or forbearance; no honest person can deny it. A true Christianity is to be Christ-like, to do as he has taught, to pattern after him who "suffered for us, *leaving us an example*, that ye should follow his steps," &c. "Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously." It seems that nothing can be plainer. But the disposition of the war-advocate is to waive such gospel truth, and turn away, looking to civil government policies as the great source and regulator of duty. Again, we are told that, "They," the rulers, "were appointed, and have solemnly sworn to see the laws executed; and only fulfil their oath of office in putting down the rebellion." We say they ought not to have done so; for Christ says, "*Swear not at all.*" And James says, "*Swear not*, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, *neither by any other oath.*" Herod should not have promised to give the damsel whatever she asked, neither should Crowninshield have listened to the wicked suggestions of the Knapps. We ought not to have assisted, if we did, in placing men in such a position, but rather exhorted them to have followed the precepts of Christ? But what do they care for the precepts of Christ? Just nothing at all; they are ready to spurn, or laugh to scorn those who advocate the doctrines of Jesus Christ. This is the character, no less of the great mass of the nominal church, than of professed infidels, and it is almost universally exhibited at the present day, when both

church and clergy are ready to support and encourage bloodshed and wholesale carnage of the most horrid description; turning their backs to the holy precepts of the Son of God. None are doing more to corrupt the community, and sink souls to perdition, than such Heaven-daring supporters of this, one of the blackest of crimes that ever stained th character of man, — war. And yet they say, "We are standing up for our country, our government, our rights." But sterling facts will prove the contrary: that their conduct has degraded and vitiated their country and their government, and taken away their rights, by the prosecution of violent measures, the elements of a corrupt government. It is corrupt and ever has been, because its principles have been at variance with the commands of God and precepts of Christ. God says, "Thou shalt not kill;" but the government directs us to kill. God says, "Thou shalt not steal; but government allows stealing, or capturing, as they call it. Christ says, "Overcome evil with good;" but the government teaches us to overcome evil with evil. And numerous others might be named to the same point. It is asked, "How would you, as a conscientious *Christian* ruler, deal with open, persistent violators of the laws?" We reply that the Scriptures declare how we should deal with our fellow-men. In the first place, before a Christian takes such a position as ruler, it is his duty to ascertain by what rule or law he himself is to be governed. If he thinks God's law is supreme, if this is fixed in his mind and affections, he will next inquire, Are those human laws, which he will be expected to enforce, in harmony with the laws of God or precepts of his professed Saviour? If they are not, it is his duty to decline, is it not? or, should he be willing to lay aside the divine law for money, or honor, or any worldly policy? Is it not enjoined upon the Christian to pursue an opposite course from that of wicked men? If these attempt to lay evil upon us, are we to lay the same upon them? The gospel does not teach it. "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwise blessing," in the exercising of those most powerful weapons, the fruits of the Spirit, which Paul used, that were "not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds." But men do not see fit to act upon this gospel principle *because they have no faith in its efficacy;* forgetting that "without" such "faith, it is impossible to please God."